St Chad's Church
Pattingham with Patshull

HEALTH AND SAFETY

WORKING AT HEIGHT POLICY

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Pattingham and Patshull PCC Health and Safety Policy (https://www.pattinghamchurch.org.uk/web/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/PCC-Health-and-Safety-Policy-approved-by-PCC-updated-16-jul-24.pdf)
- HSE Working at Height – A brief guide (https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg401.pdf)
- HSE Safe Use of Ladders and Stepladders – A brief guide (https://ladderassociation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/LA455-Safe-Use-of-Ladders-and-Stepladders-A-brief-guide.pdf)

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 came into force on 6th April 2005 and apply in England, Wales and Scotland. They apply to employers, persons under their control including volunteers and to the self-employed. The Church has a responsibility to do all that is reasonably practicable to prevent anyone falling and ensure compliance with the Work at Height Regulations 2005.

VOLUNTEERS

The Health and Safety Executive states that while most Health and Safety law specifically refers to 'employees' and the duties owed to them, it is good practice, and very strongly recommended, that people working as volunteers are given the same level of protection as employees.

WORK AT HEIGHT - DEFINITION

This means work in any place (including a place at or below ground level) from which a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury, and the duties extend to cover access to and from such a place (except by a staircase in a permanent workplace).

PLANNING AND SUPERVISION

Work at height must be properly planned and adequately supervised and must not be carried out at height where it is reasonably practicable to carry out the work in a safer way. For example, light fittings, candelabra, sanctuary lamps and other items at high level could be taken down for cleaning, restoration and repair rather than being worked on in situ.

Where work is carried out at height, reasonable measures must be taken to prevent any person falling a distance liable to cause personal injury. Where access is routinely required at high level such as the clearance of leaves and debris from gutters, or the routine maintenance of parapets and roofs, the installation of barriers or fall arrest systems may be necessary.

COMPLIANCE

The overriding principle of the regulations is that we must do all that is reasonably possible to prevent anyone from falling. To manage this process, the following steps must be undertaken:

EVERYONE MUST:

- Avoid work at heights where they can.
- Use work equipment or other measures to prevent falls where they cannot avoid working at height; and
- Where they cannot eliminate the risk of a fall, use work equipment or other measures to minimise the distance and consequences of a fall.

RULES:

St. Chad's Church, Pattingham with Patshull will comply with the regulations by adopting the following rules:

- Avoid working at height (i.e. climbing on things) wherever possible.
- Make sure that any working at height is properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out in as safe a way as reasonably practicable to prevent any persons falling a distance liable to cause injury.
- Working at height should never be done by an individual working alone. There should always be a second person to steady a ladder or call for help if an accident should occur.
- Exterior work should be postponed if the weather is likely to make it dangerous and a ladder shouldn't be used in the rain.
- Work at heights should only be carried out by people with a level of training and experience that makes them competent to do it.
- If it must be done it must be in a safe way with suitable equipment designed for the job and in such a way as to make a fall unlikely.

- The risk of objects falling on to people below must be controlled by keeping any area around the working area clear and cordoned off.
- Any equipment used must be checked for defects before use and used according to the manufacturers' instructions. All defects should be reported to the Health and Safety Officer as soon as practicably possible.
- Plans must be made for emergencies and rescue, if necessary, e.g. making sure you know where first aid kits are kept and having access to a phone to call the emergency services.

THE SAFE USE OF LADDERS

The Regulations stipulate that ladders may only be used for work at height if a risk assessment has demonstrated that the use of more suitable work equipment is not justified because of the low risk and short duration of use, or existing features on site which cannot be altered.

The HSE have indicated that 'short duration of use' is up to thirty minutes and fixed pews would be a good example of features on site which cannot be altered. In general, the following rules should be followed when using ladders:

- Do not over-stretch. Climb down and move the ladder.
- Never stand on the top three rungs.
- Only carry light materials and tools.
- If you need to carry tools use a shoulder bag or tool belt.
- Wear strong flat shoes or boots, NEVER flip flops or sandals.
- Do not use the ladder in strong winds, icy or very wet weather.
- Only use a ladder if you feel confident.
- Unless unavoidable never use the ladder by yourself, always have somebody to "foot it" for you.
- If you must use the ladder by yourself, secure it in place.
- Make sure the ground is even and firm.
- Before using, check it is sound and in working order.
- Nobody under the age of 18 is to use our ladders.
- Ladders used for access must be long enough to protrude sufficiently above the place of landing to which they provide access, unless other measures have been taken to ensure a firm handhold.
- Portable stepladders must be prevented from slipping by securing the stiles at or near their upper or lower ends, by using an effective anti-slip or other effective stability device or any other arrangement of equivalent access.
- Anyone using the church's ladders must have read this policy
- Only those authorised to do so may use the church's ladders

Approved by PCC 15th October 2024 – reviewed by Admin-IWG 29th June 2025 – due for review June 2026

St. Chad's Church, Pattingham with Patshull:

WORKING AT HEIGHT CHECKLIST

Before working at height check that the answers to all the following questions are YES.

- I will have someone with me when working at height
- I will tell someone what I am doing and when I expect to return
- I always carry a mobile phone or have a means of communicating with others
- I have ensured there is adequate lighting
- I will only use ladders for short duration
- I will ensure ladders are fixed in some way to prevent slipping
- I will ensure the base of the ladder is one unit out of every four units in height

If the answer to any question is NO you must seek professional help with your working at height task.

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